

emphasizing the role of the angel (as opposed to a direct and explicit message from Hashem). His wives put his mind at rest, that he had no bias here, and that the message was an authentic one from Hashem, which should be acted upon. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

Weekly Pele Yoetz

Each week we will offer a brief excerpt from the *sefer Pele Yoetz*. **This week's topic is: *Ahabat Re'im* – Love between Friends (Part I).**

There are many things that can cause hatred and animosity between people, but they are all meaningless. Even if a person is harmed by another physically, financially or emotionally, the Torah specifically commands us not to take revenge or to hold a grudge. This is because it was Hashem's will that he should suffer this pain, and the person who inflicted it is simply acting as Hashem's messenger. He is like a rake in the hands of the gardener.

Someone might have bad feelings towards another person who seemingly causes him a financial loss, but this comes from a lack of *emunah* and understanding that no one can take away what is designated for him to receive.

The greatest tool to eliminate hatred towards others is to judge everyone favorably. Even if someone sees another acting inappropriately, he should realize that every person sees his own actions in a positive light, and instead of disparaging him, one should pray to Hashem to help that person see his mistake and correct his ways. Someone might look down on another person who is not keeping the *misvot* properly, but he should actually be reflecting on his own actions and considering where he himself is falling short in his service of Hashem. In this way, he will be able to see others in a more positive light, and measure for measure, Hashem will view him in a positive light as well.

On Schedule

I had switched to a new dentist and had an appointment for 11:30 Thursday morning. I arrived at 11:25 and asked a woman sitting in the waiting room what time her appointment was for. She said 11:00 so I realized the dentist was already running half an hour late.

I went over to the receptionist to let her know I had arrived. She checked the scheduled appointments but seemed to have difficulty finding my name. What an inefficient office they run, I thought. She went in to speak with the dentist, then came out saying, "Everything is okay. It'll just be a few more minutes."

Soon a woman in a blue dress walked in and I asked her what time her appointment was. When she said "11:30," I thought: This dentist really tries to pack them in – two patients both scheduled for 11:30! I hope waiting in this office isn't always going to be like this. After I said that I, too, had an 11:30 appointment, the lady seemed undecided about what to do, and finally said she could do an errand and would return soon.

A short time later I was called in, treated by the dentist, and was soon on my way home. Later in the day, my husband and I were talking when suddenly he interjected, "Hey, I think it's my mother's birthday today. What's today's date?"

I went to look at the calendar. My eyes widened and my jaw fell. "What's the matter?" my husband asked. I told him what had happened at the dentist's office that morning, adding, "My appointment is actually for next Thursday at 11:30!"

The dentist's office tried to be accommodating, even though the mistake wasn't theirs. Since they were able to handle the situation, they didn't think it was important to point out that it was the patient's mistake. They didn't speak up because they didn't want to embarrass her. (The Other Side of the Story)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נְשֻׁמַת לְאָה בַּת בְּהֵיָה

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שַׁבָּת וַיֵּסֶס * יְצִיאַת מִצְרָיִם

Haftarah: Hoshea 11:7 – 12:12

DECEMBER 2-3, 2022 9 KISLEV 5783

Shir Hashirim/Minhah: **4:02 pm (upstairs)** Shaharit: **6:05, 6:45, 8:25, 8:30, 9:00 am**
Minhah: **4:12 (main shul)** Morning Shema by: **8:51 am**
Candlelighting: **4:12 pm** Shabbat Minhah: **1:30 & 3:50 pm**
Evening Shema after: **5:10 pm** Shabbat Ends: **5:10 pm, R"Y 5:42 pm**
These times are applicable only for the Deal area. Shabbat Class: **3:40 & 5:10 pm**
Weekday Shaharit: **6:45, 7:10 am**, Sundays: **8:15 am**, Weekday Minhah: **4:15 pm**

This bulletin is dedicated by **Danny & Marilyn Safdieh**
in memory of **Rachel Safdieh** לְעִילּוֹי נְשֻׁמַת רַחֵל צְבוֹת בַּת מִרְגְּלִית

Begin saying *Barech Avenu* on Sunday night, December 4 in *Arbit*.

Weather permitting, *Bircat Halebanah* will be recited on Saturday night. If not, it may be said until Wednesday night, December 7.

A Message from our Rabbi

“וְנָתַן-לִי לֶחֶם לֶאֱכֹל וּבִגְדָה לְלַבֵּשׁ”

“And He will give me bread to eat and a garment to wear.” (*Beresheet* 28:20)

We all know that bread is for eating and garments are for wearing. In the Torah, every word, even every letter, has significance. Why are the extra words necessary?

Rav Yaakov Bender explains that we gain an important insight from the simple understanding of this *pasuk*.

John D. Rockefeller was one of the wealthiest men in America. He was also quite sick. So sick that he could barely eat. He had digestive issues that severely restricted his diet and he got most of his nourishment from drinking. He was often in the hospital as doctors tried to deal with his illness.

He had all the food he could want, pantries stocked with expensive ingredients, a staff ready to prepare any dish he wanted and waiters waiting to serve him. But there was no point; he couldn't enjoy a bit of it.

Imagine being John D. Rockefeller, with rows of fashionable suits hanging in a closet, but forced to wear an unsightly hospital gown, and pantries stuffed with food and no joy in food.

Ya'akov *Abinu*, the true servant of Hashem, lives to serve Him. He only needs a

piece of bread and some water. But he asks to have food to eat and clothing to wear. He is asking Hashem that he should be able to eat his food and wear his clothes.

This is so important when it comes to raising children. If we could only teach them to enjoy these basics, we will have accomplished a great deal. When we condition our children to need more, we are making them numb to simple basic joys, and if ever the more sophisticated needs are not available, they feel like they are lacking.

Once, a recovered coronavirus patient was released from the hospital after several harrowing weeks. When leaving the hospital, he received a bill for several thousand dollars. He accepted the paper and started to cry.

Startled, the hospital receptionist asked if he had expected it to be free.

“No, I am not crying in distress,” the patient explained. “I cry because I know how much each day on the ventilator was worth, how much every breath is worth. My whole life, I breathed for free and never thought much about it. But now that Hashem has allowed me to breathe again, I will make sure to appreciate each lungful of air knowing its value.” Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

Ladder of Success

“And he dreamed, and behold a ladder was implanted in the ground, and its top reached into the heavens, and behold Angels of G-d were ascending and descending upon it.” (*Beresheet* 28:12)

Rav Avraham Zalman interprets this verse homiletically, using it as a parable to describe people as they strive to perfect themselves and their natures.

He is hardly alone, of course, in using a parable of a ladder to define our existence — we must always work to go up, say our Sages, and if a person merely tries to remain where he or she is, then gravity is going to act to pull a person down. But Rav Zalman, a leader in the *Mussar* (ethical development) movement, derives three tremendous insights from this verse.

First of all, just as a ladder has many rungs which a person must use to support himself, a person attempting to improve his or her character cannot simply leap blindly. Everything comes in steps, in stages. One must learn and use the rules of ethical behavior laid out in Jewish Law, and adopt specific practices for improvement.

A person who simply says “I’m never going to gossip again!” will probably fail within days, and may well give up on the attempt. But, especially thanks to the *Hafess Hayim*, we have today a shelf-full of books on the laws of gossip, practical examples, lessons for guarding speech in everyday life... you name it, Judaism has it. And thanks to the *Hafess Hayim* Heritage Foundation and others, we have programs to adopt certain hours of the day for special care in this area.

These, say Rav Avraham Zalman, are the rungs of the ladder. What fool would ignore the rungs, and attempt to drag himself up the left-hand pole of the ladder by his hands? And how far would he get?

Second, a ladder cannot stand unless it is leaning against a high place. A person needs models, paragons of ethical conduct, and preferably people up at the next stage of the ladder who are able to guide one upwards. A person must not look down, or fear cat-calls from people below who would rather he or she not strive for such things as good character (gossips love company!). Instead, one needs to look up towards the top, relying upon the ladder and the high place upon which it leans.

And finally, if a person encounters difficulties, if he or she slips back or falls past a broken rung — all is not lost. One must catch hold of the next rung, and start moving again. This is normal. It is even the path of those who are like Angels of G-d — truly

righteous people. They are not perfect, standing at the top of the ladder. Rather, they go upwards, and then they even go down a bit... and then they resume.

Too often, people try to achieve perfection overnight. It doesn’t work that way. It’s a slow process, and slipping back is even a natural part of that. The trick is to not be discouraged, to not give up, to not slide back down. This is how we can rise above our current state and reach our goals! (Rabbi Yaakov Menken)

Clear Message

The Almighty came to Ya’akob after twenty years of service in Laban’s house and told him, “It is time to leave. Go back to the Land of your fathers and your birthplace.” (*Beresheet* 31:3). If we study the *pesukim* which follow, we see a strange phenomenon. Ya’akob *Abinu* tells his wives that an Angel of G-d appeared to him the previous night and told him that they need to leave. “What do you think—should we leave or should we not leave?” They respond with their opinion that they should leave, but they justify that decision based on financial and familial interpersonal issues: “Do we yet have an inheritance portion in our father’s house? He considers us like strangers, for he sold us and he also consumed our money. For all the wealth that Hashem has rescued from our father belongs to us and our children. Thus, all that Hashem said to you, you should do!”

This is a mind-boggling *perashah*. First of all, Ya’akob seems to weigh whether or not to listen to what Hashem commanded him based on the advice of his wives, and second of all, his wives seem to make their calculation based on resentment of their father and financial calculations, mentioning Hashem’s command merely as an afterthought! How do we understand this strange conversation Ya’akob has with Rachel and Leah?

An additional question here is the following: When Ya’akob receives the message from Hashem, he is told directly (*Vayomer Hashem el Ya’akob*). However, when he relays the dream to his wives, he does not say he heard this message from Hashem; he says he heard the message from “an Angel of G-d.” Which was it? Was it a direct communication from Hashem or a message from an angel?

The Tolner Rebbe explains: Ya’akob *Abinu* hated being in the house of Laban. During their final confrontation, he told it to his father-in-law like it was: “I worked for you for twenty years and during that entire time you were a crook. You cheated me day and night...” Ya’akob *Abinu* cannot wait to get out of the house of Laban. One night, Ya’akob has a dream. An angel comes to him in the name of the *Ribono shel Olam* and told him “Time to leave.”

Ya’akob *Abinu* thought to himself, “Ah, this is what I have been waiting for!” But he woke up the next morning and wondered, “Did I really dream that? Did I really hear that? Or perhaps I want to get out of here so badly that I started hallucinating! Maybe I am misinterpreting my dream and we should really stay here?”

Because Ya’akob had these doubts, he decided to consult with his wives. Even though when I had the dream, I thought Hashem was speaking to me directly, I will tell them: “Listen here, last night I think an angel came to me and I think that he told me in the name of Hashem that it is time to leave here. What do you think? Is there any reason not to leave?” Ya’akob feared that his bias caused him to misinterpret his dream, and was seeking reassurance from his wives that there was no reason not to leave.

Rachel and Leah assured him that there was absolutely no reason to stay. “Therefore, what you heard was not your bias – it was the truth. An angel did come to you and tell you to leave, and therefore you should definitely act upon that vision!”

This is how to understand this *perashah*. Ya’akob *Abinu* was so concerned about truth that he needed reassurance that what he heard was not just wishful thinking or a fantasized imagination of his subconscious desires. He expressed his uncertainty by